

AC 1.1

The purpose and value of the people profession.

Baczor and Zheltoukhova (2017) identified 6 core elements of what it means to be a people professional including; expert skills and knowledge, situational judgement, social and ethical responsibility and continuing professional development (CPD). For over a century the People Profession, supported by the CIPD, has been vital in developing standards which champion better work and working lives' (CIPD, 2024a). Under CIPD standards PP's support businesses with 'principles led, evidence based and outcomes driven' knowledge and expertise on work, change and people management practices (Bond, 2022). The CIPD Profession Map (CIPD, 2024b) embeds the principles of valuing people into a Professional Standards Framework developed to support PP's to apply the principles to practice.

Despite today's PP's facing '*new and unprecedented challenges*' (Young, 2024) they must continuously strive to have an active positive impact on working lives and communities whilst simultaneously bringing value to the organisation (CIPD, 2024a). As the 'generalist HR' and demand for specialist skills and competencies remit expands, Peters (2022a) questions '*how much longer can we stretch HR?*'. Williams (2021) identifies there is a greater need than ever for HR's expertise and leadership to help navigate '*digital transformation and new operational norms*' by being front and centre in helping organisations build resilience and drive value.

PP's provide independent thought leadership by leading the way in achieving a culture that values people, inclusivity, diversity, learning and development and by using evidence-based practice to understand the factors critical for '*sustainable success in the future of work*' (Green, et al, 2020). This requires constant learning, re-evaluation and innovation from PP's and a commitment to continual professional development which encapsulates the CIPD's (2024b) *Core Knowledge, Core Behaviours and Specialist Knowledge* to ensure '*principles-based approaches*' support sound decision making.

PP's need to consider and incorporate the key principles of '*work, people and professionalism matters*' (CIPD, 2024a) into all areas of their work whilst ensuring the organisation is following both British and International People Management Standards and legislation, in areas such as health and safety, environmental management, quality management and business continuity.

AC 1.2

Applying personal and ethical values to people practice

Russell and Weeks (2024) describe ethical values as '*the moral compass by which we live our lives and make decisions*'. McElwee (2010) proposes that moral emotions are what deters us from harming others. CIPD (2019) identifies PP's as '*front line guardians*' of ethics and therefore It is necessary to apply professional ethical guidelines at all times.

Personally, as a Christian and a mother, having moral integrity at all times is important to me. Being honest, authentic and transparent whilst treating everyone with dignity and respect has helped me build both a personal and professional reputation for being supportive, fair, impartial, objective and having high standards of conduct. I utilise this in my role as a PP by cultivating professional mutual relationships based on respect, confidence, and trust. Baczor and Zheltoukhova (2017) identify moral integrity as an important characteristic for re-building trust and helping create a 'people-centric' approach to long-term sustainability

As trusted advisors PP's must always take accountability and responsibility for our decisions and actions (Russell and Weeks, 2024) and follow the CIPD's professional principles (CIPD, 2024c). As an ambassador of integrity and professionalism it is imperative as Barends, et al, (2019) state that I '*role-model ethical behaviour*' and strive to maintain a voice in championing better work and working lives that empower and create value for everyone (CIPD, 2024a).

I consistently apply the principles and values of the CIPD Profession Maps ethical 'core behaviours' to decision making by using an evidence-based approach (Russell and Weeks, 2024). I ensure fairness in processes by taking objective consideration and regularly reflecting how my actions, assumptions or decisions have different effects and outcomes for different stakeholders. The CIPD (2024a) encourages and provides tools that can empower PP's to build capabilities as the landscape of the working environment continues to adapt and shift. PP's play a key role in driving positive change (Green, et al, 2020) and promoting and embedding an ethical values and behaviours climate throughout the organisation's culture. CIPD (2024c) reports that sound decision making is derived from applying principles and beliefs that underpin ethical behaviours, decisions and actions which consider multiple stakeholder needs and interests.

Kouchaki and Smith (2020) state when facing moral challenges it's difficult to '*manage moments of truth like these*'. However consciously deliberating the dilemmas from different ethical perspectives through '*ethical lenses*' (Clarke, 2015) and applying moral theories to understanding the different ethical perspectives and situational context we can view alternative ways of seeing a situation and always make decisions based on good principles and build better values into business behaviour through job design and management practices.

AC 1.3

The importance of people professionals contributing to discussions in an informed, clear and confident way to influence others.

Peters (2022a) contends that to successfully drive effective people practices requires substantial influence. PP's need to build and maintain respectful conducive relationships which requires them to develop efficacious interpersonal skills (Reich, 2022). To understand the principles underpinning influence Cialdini (2012) introduced the '*Science of Persuasion*' and identified 6 behaviours we can use to ethically influence others which includes; authority, liking, consistency or consensus. Applying the 'principle of authority', for example, creates an '*asymmetry of power*' (Baczor and Zheltoukhova, 2017) and requires PP's to be both credible and knowledgeable.

PP's require strong analytical skills and an ability to assess, evaluate and infer accurate information to any stakeholder. To do this effectively PP's need robust data and evidence to support them. Evidence-based practice is necessary for competent, effective decision-making and developing effective solutions. A study by Deloitte (Peters, 2022a) demonstrates that Improving HR capability through engaging with data to inform decision-making and time saving 'mundane task' automation has become a top priority. It found that PP's whose strategies are driven by data *'are four times more likely to earn the respect of their business counterparts'*.

Van der Merwe and Veldsman (2024) propose PP's must *'speak the language of the business'* when communicating HR impact by ensuring HR priorities and resources are harmonised with business strategy and outcomes. PP's need to understand the importance of communicating, listening and negotiating whilst ensuring authenticity, clarity and inclusivity. The CIPD (2024a) encourages and provides tools to empower PP's to build capabilities as the landscape of the working environment continues to adapt and shift. This knowledge equips PP's with the right skills, capability and willingness to address difficult situations and conversations.

Cialdini's Principles on becoming a skilled persuader can also be utilised to defend against unethical influence attempts (Green and Young, 2019). The ramifications of not being able to effectively challenge or influence are all too prevalent as Hernandez (2019) reports scandal after scandal continue to reveal compromise or failures of ethics in decision-making and lapses in governance and leadership'. As Mayne (2024) also identifies rising cases of insider threat it is imperative that PP's must have the confidence and ability to challenge unethical decisions and as Russell and Weeks (2024) highlight they must ensure accountability for unethical behaviours and actions.

AC 1.4

Knowing when and how to raise matters that might be unethical or illegal.

PP's are expected to have *'a strong moral compass'* (Mayne, 2024), *'moral courage'* (Baczor and Zheltoukhova, 2017) and *'an ethical conscience'* (CIPD, 2019) to challenge organisations to address and consider the impact of unethical behaviour or practices on all stakeholders. The CIPD (2019) recognises that there is often a contentious balance of people versus profit however, as Mayne (2024) states PP's are required to be impartial, honest and upstanding as *'employees depend on their great judgement'*.

I have often faced ethical dilemmas and have always upheld my professional integrity because I understand how long it takes to repair the damage of lost trust and reputation. On one such dilemma whilst updating our training database during a pre audit my manager gave me assessments to file however I realised that the assessments hadn't taken place when stated and were therefore not genuine. I had no hesitation in discussing the implications of her actions directly with her and my refusal to be involved in any such practice. She stated that she had forgotten the paperwork so had just 'misdated' them when completed retrospectively. Unethical behaviour is not uncommon. The CIPD (2019) report unethical

behaviour in managers is seen by one third of PP's. The '*boundaries of my role*' as identified by Baczor and Zheltoukhova (2017) may limit the actions i can take and as the CIPD, (2019) report it is impossible to always mitigate against '*bad apples*' however as a PP i will always challenge unethical behaviour and vociferously uphold my ethical values.

At all times PP's must ensure policies and procedures are updated to comply with legal requirements for example the Worker Protection (Amendment of EA 2010) Act 2023 requires employers to now demonstrate tangible steps taken to prevent harassment. Unlike ethical breaches there is no ambiguity with legal breaches - the boundaries of right and wrong are clear (Green and Russell, 2022), I have no hesitation raising concerns either directly or by 'Whistleblowing' (Peters, 2022b) any dangerous or illegal activity i encounter or protecting others that report concerns. I, on too many occasions unfortunately, had to report potential theft to police when a Service User made an allegation. I would always collaborate fully with any external investigations whilst always ensuring a fair and reasonable investigation be fully carried out in an open, honest and transparent manner and take any action necessary.

AC 2.1

The human and business benefits of people feeling included, valued, and fairly treated at work.

Inclusivity encompasses valuing diversity, fairness and empowerment. The CIPD describes it as '*enabling each person to be themselves and achieve their full potential and thrive at work*' (Ali, 2024). Integral to the United Kingdom Equality Act 2010 (EA10) is the idea of justice and fairness. Green and Young 's (2019) report on inclusion theory uses scientific evidence to clarify how effective workplace inclusion practice correlates positively to workplace outcomes.

Reich (2022) identifies employees who feel valued are 4.6 times more likely to feel they can perform their best work therefore PP's have a responsibility to ensure we remain committed to help create and maintain an inclusive climate where everyone feels included, valued, and treated fairly. Nishii (2013) identified the key to an inclusive climate is employee voice, fair employment practices and integration of differences.

Business News Wales (2021) identified a significant increased focus from candidates on businesses' values and culture. Young (2024b) states inclusive values and behaviours are a necessary prerequisite for '*building an engaged and motivated workforce*'. Young identifies there are numerous definitions and no common understanding of employee engagement however contends the foundations of employee engagement remains the '*mutual gains*' view of motivation and people management. Psychological theories suggest that in an attempt to understand how they 'fit' employees will assess their environment (Green and Young, 2019). In light of this and changing demographics Green, et al, (2020) advocates for a more individualised intersectional approach to people management practices.

Enabling all employees to feel their value and contribution is integral to enhancing feelings of inclusion. Green and Young (2019) report that strong LMX (Leader-member exchange

theory) was associated with perceptions of inclusion and highlight that the positive link between inclusion and line management relationship is consistent over time.

It is evident that as Reich (2022) states that positive ER increases morale, motivation and productivity. Green and Young (2019) state research of inclusion climate reinforces that inclusion is linked with team innovation, creativity and knowledge-sharing. *McKinsey & Company* (2018) research revealed that a positive employee experience is more likely to result in organizational outperformance. Ayling and Suff (2024) echo improved business outcomes but also elaborate the '*high levels of employee involvement, commitment and engagement*' derived from positive ER also contribute to employees' wellbeing. The Financial Times (2024) reported evidence of wellbeing suffering if the workplace isn't inclusive stating 'creating an inclusive workplace culture is critical,'.

AC 2.2

Designing and checking people practice initiatives are inclusive

Any people practice initiatives must encompass inclusive values based leadership (Soliman, 2024a). For any initiative to succeed the organisation must ensure that the culture is inclusive and inspiring to people of all backgrounds whilst Incorporating as Murray (2024) describes the '*less visible*' aspects of diversity i.e. cognitive styles, socio-economic background, sexual orientation. Peters (2022a) states that given the turbulent working environment this requires initiatives that are flexible and solution-focused.

Soliman (2024b) proposes that talent acquisition is a determining factor of long-term organisational success which is substantially impacted by candidate experience and **to** become '*an employer of choice*' requires a supportive cultural climate where dignity, respect and inclusion are the priority. Jackson (2024) reports that despite this and the new legal obligations under the Worker Protection Act (2023) over half (53%) of young women still experience discrimination at work. Soliman (2024a) states a rise 7% rise of sexual harassment tribunal cases in the UK in the first nine months of 2024.

To ensure any initiative is effective for all Forbes (2024) states it is essential that it incorporates inclusion for all and that employees feel empowered about speaking up. To assess the initiative's reach it is necessary to gather data and measure evidence and insight at different stages of the initiative and encourage feedback from the intended recipients. Williams (2021) contends this is key to understanding employees' needs from their perspective.

Facilitating both individual and collective employee voice so employees are able to communicate views or raise concerns requires a problem solving approach (Ayling and Suff, 2024) coupled with effective engagement tools and communication channels (Peters, 2022a). The feedback and data can be analysed to identify any issues and resolve disagreements at an early stage and then potential solutions can be implemented which Williams (2021) states can result in driving change in employee engagement and culture

AC 2.3

Working inclusively with others building positive working relationships.

From the research and reflections I have undertaken (see AC 3.4) I have assessed myself against the core behaviours it requires to work inclusively with others and build positive working relationships. This helped me identify how and when to reflect and respond to skills and knowledge gaps to ensure I can develop solutions (as detailed in my CPD plan) to be more impactful and effective in working inclusively in both my current role and future career

My colleagues stated in the feedback that they have experienced me openly and actively seeking and considering diverse views and opinions including external opinions and expertise when necessary and removing barriers to inclusion throughout all processes. I believe in encouraging recognition and being fairly rewarded. Throughout my career I have had to collaborate with multiple stakeholders and undertake various joint ventures and alliances. I scored highly on encouragement and demonstrating mutual cooperation, honesty, trust and authenticity which has helped me form both the deep and meaningful relationships I have with colleagues past and present but also built a reputation for being consistently 'firm but fair'.

By viewing all interactions as an opportunity to learn more about the person, to support and encourage them to share their insights, experience and contribution helps me understand their specific perspectives, motives and behaviours which in turn can help me minimise biases by understanding, considering and valuing alternative viewpoints and removing anything that is/may become obstacles or barriers. I ensure that I encourage colleagues to take every opportunity to develop their full potential.

I endeavour to continue to provide a meaningful voice and effective safe channels so all colleagues are always given an opportunity to have open and honest conversations and are able to easily contribute and provide alternative perspectives on matters that affect them. I will continue taking a proactive approach to managing personal conflict by ensuring any disagreements are resolved at the earliest opportunity. By ensuring I continue to encourage and facilitate a safe, supportive and inclusive environment I can help enhance opportunities for all to feel they make a valued contribution as part of the larger collective.

AC 3.1

The implications of the people practitioner role evolving on ongoing professional development.

The CIPD (2020d) identifies changing demographics and diversifying employment relationships amongst the other key trends influencing HR practices. New flexible working legislation and disruption caused by COVID-19 has as Peters (2022a) states '*compelled us to rethink what our work space actually is*' as we witnessed an unprecedented shift to remote work and acceleration of digitisation and automation (Komm, et al, 2021) in expediting processes and working methods

PP's face continual change and new challenges daily and therefore have to be '*future fit*' (Peters, 2022a) to evolve and adapt with emerging and often unprecedented opportunities and priorities. To achieve this Baczor and Zheltoukhova (2017) state that PP's have to undertake '*multiple role shifts and reinterpretations*'.

Cook (2019) states that PP's are lacking exposure to 'generalist' skills due to the mass adoption of the specialised shared services/business partnering model and states few PP's are competent in '*vital employee relations*'. Despite this, Ayling and Suff (2024) identified a '*greater need than ever*' for employee relations expertise. However, Peters (2022a) reports 42% of SMEs are moving to a singular HR team which should increase exposure to the broad set of skills, including ER and IR required.

Peters (2022a) highlights that as a PP i have a personal responsibility to think holistically to proactively identify gaps for professional development and growth and reported 40% of PP's in generalist roles had to upskill in response to immediate business needs. Van der Merwe and Veldsman (2024) propose the increased need for business acumen, change management, data literacy, and technology integration amongst others. The CIPD (2020d) reiterates the significance of PP's creating an organisational culture with the skills in which people feel open and ready to embrace digital transformation.

Van der Merwe and Veldsman (2024) suggest PP's defining and implementing a future-focused and business relevant holistic competency framework. I have and can use the Profession Map (CIPD, 2024b) at any time to help me prepare for any tasks, roles or specialism's that may become necessary by building skills, knowledge and behaviours based on '*competent and credible foundations*'. There are related entries in my CPD Plan to reflect how I'm preparing for some of the oncoming changes identified.

AC 3.2

Assessment of my strengths, weaknesses and development areas

As well as reviewing external implications for professional development It is necessary to consider gaps in my knowledge or experience so I can identify and understand my strengths and areas for improvement or opportunity. This enables me to prioritise my development. To accomplish this I had to first identify what questions would help derive how I am perceived by others and undertake purposeful reflection on my ability to work ethically, inclusively and positively. I used various methods to collect 360 degree feedback including anonymous surveys, previous appraisals, questionnaires and one to one meetings form both current and previous colleagues at varied levels throughout their organisations to get a more complete picture across the various roles i have undertaken throughout my career. In addition, I used external research and data and various CIPD tools and also assessed myself against the CIPD's core behaviours (2024e) for ethics and inclusivity.

My greatest strength is my passion for learning and commitment to personal development as this drives me to continuously improve and grow both personally and professionally. I have acquired business acumen and excellent interpersonal skills through extensive experience of building positive, inclusive relationships whilst working successfully with multiple

stakeholders collaborating across teams, functions and organisations. I have developed a range of 'generalist PP skills' through the varied roles I have undertaken which has provided me with good core knowledge and behaviours. I consistently demonstrate integrity, consistency and professionalism by considering responsible choices and applying professional principles and values

The weaknesses I identified were a lack of knowledge particularly in ER specialist skills and digital skills in areas such as data analytics and AI technology. In addition, It was highlighted that my strong northern accent continues to intimidate people on first encounters despite my efforts to use positive language, tone, expression and body language. My Personal commitments limit my time availability in the employment market and for learning. I have experienced a lack of flexible part time positions and I require learning methods that both suit my learning style and are flexible and on demand which allows me to develop at my own pace and convenience.

From both self reflection and the varied research on upcoming trends and influences I identified opportunities for development areas which I incorporated into my CPD plan.

AC 3.3

Appropriate CPD options to support ongoing learning.

Whilst I continue to work towards developing myself in all of the core areas I was also able to identify the most prominent skills developmental needs and priorities I require both in terms of general digital/technology skills and specifically specialist knowledge standards for ER - aligned to enhancing my interpersonal skills and developing myself against the 'next level up' for my prospective career path.

The activities I have chosen to incorporate in my CPD Plan were based on both an interest in specific development (in ER) and the recommended resources from undertaking the CIPD's self assessment on core behaviours. The learning recommendations and resources are tailored specifically to me to address any gaps identified from the assessments and any specialist knowledge I want to research and develop. From both the personal feedback and in terms of career development I have chosen materials that can help. In terms of developing behaviours I want and need to enhance my understanding and learning of managing conflict more effectively for both my personal development and in assisting others to resolve conflict when it arises. In addition I completed the online course working inclusively CIPD (2024e) to help me reflect on how to improve my skills in this core behaviour by applying the principles and examples throughout my work.

AC 3.4

My Continuous Professional Development Record:

CPD Record		
Key dates	What did you do?	Why?
15/12/2024	Survey and Questionnaire	To collect feedback into how I am perceived to demonstrate ethical and inclusive behaviours in practice. I will then use the information to cross reference with my own analysis to inform my continuous professional development
What did you learn from this?	I learnt that I'm consistently demonstrating ethical and inclusive behaviours and applying them in practice. I gained an understanding of others' opinions on areas where I perform well and areas where I could implement improvement or development. It enabled me to generate conclusions and actions for making future improvements and preventing repeated mistakes	
How have/will you use this? Any further action?	I added the development needs I identified to my PDP so that I can continue to improve competency through learning and knowledge. I will adopt and apply reflective practice in my continued professional development.	
Key dates	What did you do?	Why?
23/12/2024	Undertook CIPD self assessments against ethical and inclusive core behaviours	To identify areas where i perform well and where i have potential skills gaps and to compare against survey data to highlight any inconsistencies
What did you learn from this?	Whilst I have a good grounding and work well I was able to identify which relevant learning and resources materials will help me create my personalised professional development pathway so that I can improve my skills and knowledge and build capability. In particular i need to enhance my knowledge and skills in Conflict resolution and improve my confidence in sharing knowledge	
How have/will you use this? Any further action?	Incorporate the resources and activities into my PDP	
Key dates	What did you do?	Why?
27/12/2024	Conducted a SWOT Analysis	to identify and evaluate my strengths and weaknesses and examine how these might affect my professional development

What did you learn from this?	This helped me understand my own professional strengths and weaknesses and to look at what opportunities or potential disruptors might impede my progress. I learnt that I need to improve my digital competency and want to improve both my conflict resolution skills and my specialist knowledge in ER to help progress my professional competence and enhance my future employment opportunities.	
How have/will you use this? Any further action?	Continually monitor for opportunities and threats and to make any necessary changes to keep skills relevant that my learning has enabled me to plan. Identify and access digital competency and ER learning and development materials and tools Attend webinars and online training, research employment law updates trends.	
Key dates	What did you do?	Why?
15/12/2025	Completed the CIPD's online course on working inclusively to develop this behaviour so that I can achieve more positive outcomes both for myself and the business.	Think about what working inclusively means and what steps can be taken to include others? To understand what areas of my work would benefit from more inclusive working.
What did you learn from this?	I used the reflection activity to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how I personally value what inclusivity brings to everyone. It provided information on how to build confidence and practice in role modelling and advocating the value of including others and embracing differences. It demonstrated a diverse range of perspectives and views and provided 'working examples' to apply to practice. Working through each stage and completing the reflection activities throughout helped me identify how I value and implement inclusivity and areas where this can be improved.	
How have/will you use this? Any further action?	I will continue to expand my knowledge by using the resources identified in my assessments and other suitable reliable resources. I will use the knowledge to continue to build inclusive collaborative relationships across organisational boundaries, cultures and other disciplines. Apply the examples to create solutions to appropriate scenarios if they arise Proactively share knowledge, experience and expertise	
Key dates	What did you do?	Why?
What did you learn from this?		
How have/will you use this? Any further action?		

Excerpts from my CPD Plan:

CPD Plan		
What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	Target dates for review and completion
How current and previous colleagues view my ethical and inclusive behaviours and actions	Seek 360 degree feedback	20/12/2024
What resources or support will I need?	Questionnaires, surveys, arrange one to one meetings	
What will my success criteria be?	Collecting relevant and insightful data	
What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	Target dates for review and completion
Identify and assess my strengths and weaknesses	Assess myself against the CIPD'S Profession Map core behaviours and conduct a SWOT analysis	01/01/2025
What resources or support will I need?	Working Inclusively and Ethical Practice self assessment tools on Knowledge Hub SWOT analysis template	
What will my success criteria be?	Clarity for use of reflective information in planning personal development needs	

What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	Target dates for review and completion
Improve professional core knowledge in working inclusively	Undertake the activities as identified on my CIPD learning plan	Ongoing
What resources or support will I need?	As specified in my CIPD learning plan	
What will my success criteria be?	Ongoing professional development	
What do I want/need to learn?	What will I do to achieve this?	Target dates for review and completion
Specialist ER Skills and Knowledge	Gain as much knowledge and experience as possible	Ongoing
What resources or support will I need?	Various learning and research materials. Try to find a mentor.	
What will my success criteria be?	Promotion to a specialist ef role	

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